

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /056 W
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R 180636Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6243
INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC HONOLULU
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 3826

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, JA
SUBJECT: CGP ELECTORAL SUCCESS BRING UNCERTAINTY

SUMMARY: AS RESULT OF DRAMATIC LOWER HOUSE ELECTION
GAINS AND ACQUISITION OF POTENTIAL "SING VOTE," CGP
(KOMEITO) IMPORTANCE HAS INCREASED CONSIDERABLY. AT
SAME TIME, HOWEVER, NEW-FOUND POWER HAS BROUGHT
UNCERTAINTY TO LEADERSHIP WHICH IS FINDING PARTY
INCREASINGLY AT ODDS WITH OTHER OPPOSITION PARTIES AS
JAPAN GEARS UP FOR COMING UPPER HOUSE ELECTION. WHILE
CGP WILL IN COMING MONTHS CAREFULLY ATTEMPT TO KEEP
LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN TO BOTH LDP AND OPPOSITION,
WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE THAT ITS AMORPHOUS POLICIES WILL
COME INTO SUBSTANTIALLY SHARPER FOCUS FOR SOME TIME.
END SUMMARY.

1. CGP (KOMEITO) LEADERSHIP AND RANK-AND-FILE HAVE REASON
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TO BE HIGHLY SATISFIED WITH GAINS (FROM 30 TO 56 SEATS)
IN DECEMBER LOWER HOUSE ELECTION AND CONFIDENT ABOUT
PARTY'S FUTURE ROLE. WITH SITUATION OF NEAR BALANCE
BETWEEN LDP AND OPPOSITION IN DIET, MODERATE CGP WITH
POTENTIAL "SWING VOTE" HAS MOVED INTO POSITION WHERE ITS
VIEWS MUST BE HEARD. IN NUMBER OF DIET COMMITTEES, ITS
SUPPORT COULD TIP BALANCE IN LDP'S FAVOR. IN LONGER

TERM, PARTY IS ONE OF THREE POTENTIAL CANDIDATES TO ENTER COALITION WITH CONSERVATIVES IF LDP MAJORITIES CONTINUE TO ERODE.

2. OVER THE YEARS A UNITED CGP LEADERSHIP HAS STEERED CAREFULLY CONTRIVED "RESPONSIBLE," SLIGHTLY LEFT-OF-CENTER COURSE--CRITICAL OF LDP, BUT NOT "REVOLUTIONARY"--WITH STRONG EMPHASIS ON IMPROVED SOCIAL WELFARE DOMESTICALLY AND EVEN-HANDED DIPLOMACY INTERNATIONALLY. ALTHOUGH ITS PLATFORM CALLS FOR NEGOTIATED TERMINATION OF THE US-JAPAN SECURITY TREATY, IT HAS NOT ACTIVELY PURSUED THIS AND PARTY LEADERS HAVE INFORMED US PRIVATELY THAT THEY ARE IN NO RUSH. PARTY LEADERSHIP HAS FOUND MODERATELY PROGRESSIVE IMAGE EMINENTLY SUCCESSFUL IN APPEALING TO BULK (70-80 PERCENT) OF ITS ELECTION SUPPORTERS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF LOWER MIDDLE CLASS, ANTI-COMMUNIST SOKA GAKKAI AND IN ATTRACTING ALONG WAY A FEW UNCOMMITTED VOTERS OF BOTH RIGHT AND LEFT INCLINATIONS. ACQUISITION OF "SWING VOTE" POTENTIAL AND POSSIBILITY OF COALITION GOVERNMENT HAS, HOWEVER, RESULTED IN INCREASING FRICTION WITH OTHER OPPOSITION PARTIES AND PROMPTED UNCERTAINTY AMONG CGP LEADERSHIP.

3. FOR MANY YEARS CGP LEADERSHIP, CONSCIOUS OF PARTY'S GROWTH LIMITATIONS IMPOSED BY ITS RELIGIOUS IDENTIFICATION HELD TO VIEW, IN PUBLIC AT LEAST, THAT KEY TO ACHIEVEMENT OF GOALS WAS ESTABLISHMENT OF "PROGRESSIVE, POST-LDP" COALITION THROUGH COOPERATION WITH OTHER OPPOSITION PARTIES IN DIET AND DURING ELECTIONS. LEADERSHIP HAS PUSHED HARD IN

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THIS DIRECTION AND SOUGHT TO ESTABLISH COMMON GROUND FOR OPPOSITION UNITY. SUCH COOPERATION HAS PROVEN ELUSIVE, HOWEVER, AND WHILE CGP HAS BEEN ABLE TO UNITE WITH OTHER PARTIES ON SPECIFIC DIET ISSUES, ATTEMPTS AT ELECTORAL COOPERATION, EVEN WHEN FORMAL AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN CONCLUDED, HAVE NOT PROVEN SATISFACTORY AS PARTIES FREQUENTLY FIND THEY ARE COMPETING FOR SAME VOTES. DOOR WAS FIRMLY SLAMMED ON FUTURE COOPERATION WITH JCP AS RESULT OF SEVERELY CRITICAL RANK-AND-FILE REACTION TO 1974-75 ATTEMPT BY DAISAKU IKEDA, HEAD OF PARENT ORGANIZATION, SOKA GAKKAI, TO REACH ACCORD WITH JCP CHAIRMAN MIYAMOTO. MORE RECENTLY, LEFTWARD TILT OF JSP, SEEN IN DEFEAT OF MODERATE LEADERSHIP IN DECEMBER ELECTION, DOMINATION OF FEBRUARY PARTY CONVENTION BY RADICAL SOCIALISM ASSOCIATION, AND CONTINUED JSP INSISTENCE ON INCLUSION OF JCP IN ANY POST-LDP COALITION, HAS RAISED SERIOUS DOUBTS WITHIN CGP ABOUT POSSIBILITIES FOR FUTURE COOPERATION WITH JSP AS WELL AS ABOUT FUTURE OF "SOCIETY TO THINK ABOUT A NEW JAPAN" AND ITS EFFORTS TO

PROMOTE ALIGNMENT OF DSP, CGP AND MODERATE ELEMENTS OF JSP.

4. OPPOSITION COOPERATION ISSUE DOMINATED CGP FEBRUARY 26-28 CONVENTION WHERE NORMALLY DOCILE DELEGATES WERE UNCHARACTERISTICALLY CRITICAL OF LEADERSHIP FOR ITS INSISTENCE ON COOPERATION WITH JSP IN FORTHCOMING UPPER HOUSE ELECTION. PARTY LEADERSHIP, CAUGHT BETWEEN ANTI-LEFT ATTITUDES OF RANK-AND-FILE AND ITS DESIRE TO LEAVE DOOR OPEN TO FUTURE OPPOSITION COOPERATION, INCLUDING POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE COALITION GOVERNMENT, REJECTED OUTRIGHT COOPERATION WITH JCP (ON GROUND IT DID NOT SUPPORT PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION) AND WITH LDP (BECAUSE OF ITS FINANCIAL TIES TO BIG BUSINESS). LEADERSHIP INDICATED THERE WAS SOME HOPE FOR COOPERATION WITH DSP AND NLC, AND ALONG THIS LINE SUGGESTED THAT PARTY MIGHT BE AMENABLE TO SUPPORT SELECTED NON-AFFILIATED CANDIDATES IF CONDITIONS WERE RIGHT. WHILE LEADERSHIP, CONFIDENTIAL

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REFLECTING CONVENTION MOOD, WAS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF JSP FOR ITS CONTINUED SUPPORT OF JCP, IT NEVERTHELESS HELD THERE WAS NEED FOR COOPERATION WITH JSP IN ORDER TO PRESERVE SOME SEMBLANCE OF OPPOSITION UNITY.

5. COMMENT. CGP LEADERSHIP HAS ENTERED PERIOD OF RECONSIDERATION OF ITS RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES. FOR TIME BEING AT LEAST, ITS HANDS ARE TIED IN DEALING WITH JSP. WHILE IT SHARES MUCH COMMON GROUND WITH LDP, NLC AND DSP, FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES OF RELIGION, IMAGE, POLITICAL BACKING, ETC., HAVE THUS FAR PREVENTED ESTABLISHMENT OF LASTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEM. GIVEN THIS SITUATION, WE EXPECT THAT CGP WILL CAREFULLY ATTEMPT TO KEEP LINES OPEN TO BOTH CONSERVATIVES AND OTHER OPPOSITION PARTIES, COOPERATING IN DIET WITH ONE SIDE OR OTHER ON CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. DURING THIS PERIOD OF FLUX, WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE THAT CGP POLICIES, AMORPHOUS AT BEST, WILL COME INTO SUBSTANTIALLY SHARPER FOCUS.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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TAGS: PINT, JA, CGP, KOMEITO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f9a25cb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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